

WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU WORMED YOUR BIRDS

by LEEANN C. GRAHAM

Most bird keeper / breeders know that worms are a problem and if not treated they can block the small or large intestine and eventually kill the bird. Birds should be worm every 6 months if housed on concrete and every 3 months if housed on dirt flooring. Suspended aviary, people think that because they can't get on the ground they will not get worms. In my opinion as an avian veterinary nurse this is not true, I have seen birds that have been in suspended aviaries since they were embryos, and have become so sick due to worms that they have died because of it. Personally I hate the word worms or finding out that my birds have worms. Most of my birds are on concrete or suspended aviaries. So when worming, pop either crop worms them or feed worm them. With crop needle, we have four of them and it usually takes about 2 or 3 weeks as I autoclave them in between aviary.

Using basic hygiene can also help control worms, most worms need intermediate host environment or animal (e.g. Poor drainage of floors, water bowls overflow and food bowls being on the ground, they provide suitable housing for insects. These insects being exposed to the resident bird's faeces to complete the cycle and act as intermediate host.

Many clients have started mailing in faeces for faecal float examination, so they can treat their birds before the breeding season or if they don't look great, some bird breeders put this down to a worm problem, but in fact there could be several problems why their birds looks sick.

Many people are mailing in their birds faecal samples as when they get home from work and its too dark.. If you are a client that is mailing in your birds faecal samples make sure that they are moist not dry like concrete. Wrap them in something that doesn't absorb (e.g.) Glad Wrap.

When the Veterinary Clinic receives the sample they set them up in a saturated sodium nitrate and allow them to set for 10-15 minutes. When examined under the microscope the Vet will be able to tell you if your birds have a worm problem and if so what type of worm eggs were found.

Remember birds that spend more time on the ground foraging tend to pick up worms easier.

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